DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 384 648 TM 023 864

AUTHOR Ceaser, Lisbeth; West, John
TITLE The Development of a Procedure for Placing Education Students in Public Schools for Field Work Activities. Emergence of Higher Education in America.
PUB DATE Mar 91
NOTE 23p.; Ed. D. Practicum, Nova University.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses - Practicum Papers (043) -- Tests/Evaluation Instruments (160)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Students; Cooperation; *Education Majors; Field Experience Programs; Higher Education; Professional Development; Public Schools; School Districts; *Student Placement; Student Teachers; *Teacher Education; *Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS *California Polytechnic State University

ABSTRACT

This developmental project was designed to solve the conflict between the Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo and the local public school districts regarding the placement of education students in public school classrooms for field work activities. The conflict arose when one major school district restricted the number of student placements, education faculty withdrew activity assignments to that district, and classroom teachers and education students lost a professional growth opportunity. This project developed a systematic procedure for placing students in field work assignments in an equitable and collaborative manner. The result of this procedure was improved communication between all the public schools in the area and the Center for Teacher Education. Students and classroom teachers are once again collaborating in professional development programs. A recommendation of this project is that the placement procedure developed be used for all Center field work activities. One appendix presents the procedure and the other contains a letter asking for procedure evaluation. (Contains eight references.) (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 384 648

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROCEDURE FOR PLACING EDUCATION STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS FOR FIELD WORK ACTIVITIES

Emergence of Higher Education in America

by Lisbeth Ceaser

California Polytechnic State University

San Luis Obispo

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
LISBETH CEASER

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)"

John West, Ed.D.

Santa Ana Cluster

A practicum report presented to Nova University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

Nova University

March 1991

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

TM023864

ABSTRACT

This developmental project was designed to solve the conflict between the Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo and the local public school districts regarding the placement of education students in public school classrooms for field work activities. The conflict arose when one major school district restricted the number of student placements, education faculty withdrew activity assignments to that district, and classroom teachers and education students lost a professional growth opportunity.

This project developed a systematic procedure for placing students in field work assignments in an equitable and collaborative manner. The result of this procedure was improved communication between all the public schools in the area and the Center for Teacher Education. Students and classroom teachers are once again collaborating in professional development programs. A recommendation of this project is that the placement procedure developed be used for all Center field work activities.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter		Page
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	Nature of the Problem	1
	Purpose of the Study	3
	Significance of the Study	4
	Relationship of the Study to the Seminar	5
2	REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	6
3	METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES	8
	Definition of Terms	8
	Procedures	8
	Collection of the Data	9
4	RESULTS	10
5	DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	13
	Discussion	13
	Conclusions	13
	Implications	14
	Recommendations	14
REFERENCES		15
APPENDICES		
A	Education 401 Placement Procedure	
B	Evaluation Letter	

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo is a major teacher training institution. As such, the Center maintains an enrollment of approximately 250 students per quarter. An average of 90 students graduate each quarter, with a like number entering the program. The public school districts of San Luis Obispo, southern Monterey, and northern Santa Barbara Counties serve as the field work sites for practice teaching, observations, and early field work activities. There are four large school districts in this area and eight smaller districts with a total of 60 schools. Since many of the smaller schools are located a distance from the University campus, placement procedures for field work assignments have been the target of numerous complaints from students, cooperating teachers, school administrators, and University faculty and administration.

Nature of the Problem

Traditionally, the four large school districts that serve as laboratories for education students have effectively absorbed the student population. The schools in these

districts are located conveniently near campus and students, cooperating teachers, and faculty are able to maintain frequent communication and comfortable scheduling of activities. The smaller school districts require as much as three hours of driving from the University, and have limited situations for field work activities. As student enrollment in the Center for Teacher Education grows, conflict has arisen over the placement of students in preferred locations for field work activities.

Another conflict over the placement of field work students concerns all districts as well as the University. Each institution seeks to provide the highest quality education for its own clients; the mission of one does not always support that of another. For example, student teachers should ideally experience a classroom environment that provides an example of excellent instruction. Yet, a school administrator may feel a student teacher would serve a better purpose in a classroom where deficient teaching is taking place.

Some cooperating teachers are assigned education students repeatedly, while others are given little or no opportunity to participate in University programs. This fact generates disparity among school teaching staffs as well as complaints from parents who see a constant succession of practicing teachers in their child's classroom.

While it is agreed by all parties concerned that future teachers need to be in the classroom frequently throughout the preparatory program, conflicts over how to facilitate field work activities are evident at the Center for Teacher Education at this University. The problem is that there is no systematic procedure for placing education students in classroom field work situations.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this proposed study is to develop a systematic procedure for placing education students in public school classrooms for field work activities. The procedure developed needs to reflect the interests, needs, and purposes of individual schools, cooperating teachers, school districts, local communities, student teachers, teacher educators, and the University. In addition, the procedure developed should aim to promote change. That change consists of improved communication and collaboration between the public schools and the Center for Teacher Education. The expertise of in-service teachers is a valuable resource for teachers in training. The University offers a wealth of applied research information and pre-service teachers provide fresh energy and motivation for improving education. A major purpose of this project is to facilitate the improvement of the educational system.

Significance of the Study

The decision to develop a systematic placement procedure is motivated by two factors. First, one of the large public school districts in the area adopted a policy that required all field work students to complete an application, process the application through the Center for Teacher Education and University administrative services, then, obtain approval from the District School Board before school site visitation could take place. As a result of this policy, students in field work activities were placed only in the classrooms of other school districts. Teachers in the boycotted school district missed the professional development opportunities of participation in a University program and students lost the opportunity to complete field work activities within walking distance of the University campus.

Secondly, a major goal of the Center for Teacher Education is the collaboration of teacher preparation programs with public school systems. In December 1990, the Superintendent of the boycotted school district and the Director of the Center for Teacher Education issued a statement that directed Center faculty to place field work students in local classrooms once more. With the District placement policy still in effect, Center faculty continued to boycott those classroom assignments. The development of a systematic procedure for the placement of education students

in public school classrooms for field work activities will facilitate the equitable participation of public school districts with teacher education programs. The aim of this proposed project is to improve the professional development of pre- and in-service teachers through collaborative efforts and interactive communication.

Relationship of the Study to the Seminar

The purpose of the Emergence of Higher Education in America Seminar is to familiarize students with themes, trends, or elements of the past applicable to present day educational institutions. As Lynton and Elman (1988) describe the emerging extended university, we find that collaboration between practitioners and academics is a recurring priority for higher education.

> There exists a strong reciprocal reinforcement between the extended definition of scholarship, on the one hand, and emerging instructional needs, on the other. It seems to us that it is precisely this two-way interaction that provides an inner logic and a substantial coherence to the model of the extended university. The necessary adaptations in each area relate to each other; each is made easier by the other (Lynton and Elman, 1988; 81).

The purpose of this proposed project is to improve the two-way interaction between the University Center for Teacher Education and practicing teaching professionals in the local area.

Chapter 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are a number of reports that support the value of collaboration between teacher preparatory institutions and public school systems (Goodlad, 1983; Hopkins, 1990; Shanker, 1989; Yarger, 1990). In writing about the mutual benefits of community-university partnerships, Thomas M. Stauffer (1989) notes:

> Partnership universities mark a further evolutionary step in American higher education. They are at one and the same time responsive to national and to local needs. They are contemporary in outlook, but they have not abandoned traditional scholarly values ... the model is, on the whole, a viable institutional strategy for initiation and maintenance of economic and cultural development.

The emergence of a teacher education process that develops teaching competencies through a wide range of field experiences is supported by historical case studies (Klopf and Bowman, 1966).

> Such experiential learning must be reinforced by ... a very close working relationship with the pre-service training staff of the institution of higher learning and with the administrative, supervisory, and instructional personnel of the schools.

More recently, as Richard I. Arends (1990) seeks a reorganization of teacher education in America, he suggests that connecting the University to the school will require a consensus of opinion about responsibility for pre- and in-service professional development. To do collaborative work will require committed persons to plan and coordinate delicate interorganizational relationships and activities. It is the intention of this project to promote communication between the Teacher Education Center and the public school systems regarding teacher development activities that benefit both units of responsibility.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

Definition of Terms

Collaboration included the elements of:

1. All parties concerned had the opportunity to express the goals and professional position of their responsibility unit.
2. Common and divergent goals were clearly stated.
3. Roles of participants were clearly stated.

Education 401 Reading Methods in the Elementary School was the title of a teacher preparation course offered by the Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo. This course required two hours per week of field work activity in addition to three hours per week of lecture. Education 401 was the target course for the project of developing a collaborative procedure for placing education students in classroom environments for field work activities.

Procedures

The procedure required collaboration between the public school systems and the Center for Teacher Education. The instructor of Education 401 outlined course activity

requirements and presented that outline to all twelve local school districts. The districts were invited to participate in the tutoring program. Upon acceptance of the invitation, the Education 401 instructor provided each school site with information regarding course requirements. The instructor also provided each school site administrator with a list of assigned students, a schedule of tutoring activities, and a University contact for ongoing communications regarding the program. Following one quarter of implementation of this procedure, each participating teacher, administrator, and student was given a letter asking for feedback regarding the placement procedure.

Collection of the Data

All feedback letters were read by the 401 instructor, who then categorized and summarized the responses. The summary was submitted to the Director of the Center for Teacher Education for review and presentation to the Coordinating Council. Acceptance of the placement procedure by the Coordinating Council was considered the successful achievement of the project.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

The first procedure of this project was for the instructor of Education 401 Reading Methods in the Elementary Classroom to write an outline of course objectives and specific field work activity requirements. This outline was completed two weeks prior to the beginning of the University quarter, and was presented to all twelve school districts through each school principal along with an invitation to participate in the field work activity. Ten schools from six school districts responded, including two schools from the previously boycotted district.

Next, the Education 401 students were given the names and locations of the ten participating schools and asked to select three preferences for their field work assignment. All 29 students were placed in their first or second choice of assignment. A list of students to be on campus was given to each school site administrator. Before site visitations began in the fourth week of the quarter, the Education 401 instructor met with the teachers and principals of three schools and spoke by telephone with a lead teacher or principal from the other seven schools to establish a communication contact for the program. One week before the

field work activity was to begin, students visited the school sites for orientation and scheduling of activity time.

Field work activities then proceeded as outlined in the Education 401 overview. Assignments continued for two hours per week for seven weeks. After each site visitation, students were instructed to leave a summary statement of the tutoring experience for the classroom teacher.

At the conclusion of the quarter, students, teachers and school site administrators were asked to evaluate the Education 401 field activity, including placement procedures and communications. Twenty seven students, 24 teachers, and three administrators responded. The response comments were categorized as negative, positive, and suggestive. Students were also asked their opinions of the value of the course, and teachers were asked if they were willing to participate in the program again. Table 1 illustrates the summary of responses.

Table 1

Responses to Field Work Activity Evaluation

	Responses		
Group	Negative	Positive	Suggestion
Teachers	1	23	4
Students	3	24	8

Analyses of student evaluations revealed a high degree of satisfaction with the course, and all 24 responding teachers were willing to participate in the program again. Two students did not complete the field work or the course; one due to personal problems, the other because of incompetency.

The summary of the Education 401 Course and Field Work Activity Placement Procedure was submitted to the Director of the Center for Teacher Education for presentation to the Coordinating Council. The Director also reported to the boycotted district that seven students had been placed in classrooms within that district. The conclusion of this project was achieved by the acceptance of the described procedure by the Coordinating Council of the Center for Teacher Education.

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

This project satisfied the major goal of the Center for Teacher Education for collaborating with the public school systems. The theories of Goodlad (1983), Hopkins (1990), Shanker (1989), and Yarger (1990) have been verified by the positive response to this collaborative effort. Even though the independent goals and missions of the two institutions may be separate, this project showed that the interests of one can be met along with the interests of the other.

Klopf and Bowman (1966) promoted a teacher education process that develops teaching competencies through a wide range of field experiences. The present study investigated one aspect of such a process.

Conclusions

The interactive communication between school and university can make a difference for both institutions. Working together for the common goal of quality staff development experiences for both pre- and in-service teachers is an effective process.

Implications

This developmental project was designed to solve a collaboration problem between the Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo and the local public school systems. The establishment of positive two-way communication and interaction between teaching practitioners and teacher educators is most important. The implication of this project is that collaborative professional development programs are effective for public school teachers today, and in the future.

Recommendations

The Center for Teacher Education at California Polytechnic State University in San Luis Obispo will benefit from this project in terms of effective teacher education. This procedure for placing education students in public school classrooms for field work activities should serve as a model for other methods courses. Interactive communication and ongoing evaluation should be an integral part of each field work program in order to achieve the University goal of collaboration. This project should be one step toward the extended university that is "a more exciting, a more effective, and a more rewarding place to teach, to learn, and to be educated" (Lynton and Elman, 1987, p. 169).

REFERENCES

Arends, Richard I. "Connecting the University to the School," Changing School Culture Through Staff Development. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1990.

Goodlad, John. A Place Called School. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hopkins, David. "Integrating Staff Development and School Improvement: A Study of Teacher Personality and School Climate," Changing School Culture Through Staff Development. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1990.

Klopf, Gordon J., and Bowman, Garda W. Teacher Education in a Social Context. New York: Bank Street College of Education, 1966.

Lynton, Ernest A., and Elman, Sandra E. New Priorities for the University. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1988.

Shanker, Albert. "Staff Development and the Restructured School," Changing School Culture Through Staff Development. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1990.

Stauffer, Thomas M. "A University Model for the 1990's," An Agenda for the New Decade. Berkeley, California: Jossey-Bass, 1990.

Yarger, Sam J. "The Legacy of the Teacher Center," Changing School Culture Through Staff Development. Alexandria, Virginia: Association for Supervision and Curriculum, 1990.

Appendix A

PLACEMENT PROCEDURE FOR FIELD WORK ACTIVITIES

Education 401: Reading Methods in the Elementary Schools

1. Education 401 Course Overview and invitation to participate in Reading Tutoring Activity are sent to all schools in the Cal Poly geographic area by the Education 401 Instructor. (Two weeks prior to first quarter week)

2. From a list of schools accepting invitations, students select three preferred locations for field work. (Week one of the quarter).

3. Education 401 Instructor contacts schools to give list of students, provide teachers with information, arrange for student orientation, and on-going University contacts. (Weeks two-three of the quarter).

4. Students attend orientation session with school site administrator and teachers to confirm schedules and review school visitation policies. (Week three of the quarter).

5. Students begin Reading Tutoring activities. Before leaving the school site each student is directed to leave a summary statement of the tutoring session for the participating teacher. (Weeks four through ten of the quarter).

6. Teachers, students, and site administrators complete an evaluation of the field work activity and the placement procedures. (Week ten of the quarter).

7. The Education 401 Instructor summarizes the evaluations and reports the results to the Director of the Center for Teacher Education. (Two weeks prior to the beginning of the next quarter).

Appendix B

To: Students, teachers, school site administrators

From: Instructor Education 401: Reading Methods in the Elementary School

Re: Evaluation of Reading Tutoring Field Work Activity

Thank you for your participation in the Education 401 Reading Tutoring activity. I hope that this program provided opportunity for professional growth and a positive experience for the children involved. Would you please comment on the following items so that this program may be evaluated and modified? Your response is greatly appreciated.

1. Placement procedures:

2. Overall program:

3. Communication procedures:

4. Suggestions: